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DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS EMPLOYEE'S NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1981

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

I would like to welcome you to the first edition of the Department's newsletter—and hope it proves to be a useful way of keeping you informed of decisions that affect you and the Department of Highways.

I would also like you to know that I look forward to working with you over the next several years. The Highway Department faces a number of challenges that will require the best out of all of us.

We are, as most of you are already aware, facing reduction in the amounts of money that will be available for highway funding. The Reagan Administration proposes to reduce the Federal Highway Program by \$11 billion over the next five years and to end Federal Aid for Secondary and Urban Systems by 1983.

At the same time, one of the principle sources of state revenue, fuel taxes, is starting to level off and even decrease as consumers of gasoline react to \$1.40 a gallon prices.

Third, we are under increasing scrutiny by the Legislature which has substantial, and not unfounded, concerns over the operations, management, and efficiency of the State's largest department. Those concerns are reflected in HJR 56, a resolution calling for a complete study by an interim legislative committee of all areas of the Highway Department not covered by a performance audit; in HB 500, the appropriation bill requiring the implementation of management systems within specified deadlines; and in a decision by the Legislative Audit Committee to do a performance audit of major programs over the next two years.

These are substantial challenges for the Department that need to be viewed as opportunities to make us the best highway department in the nation.

I intend to move toward that objective by establishing four priorities for the next several years.

1. Funding—we need to obtain approval for funding the Highway Department's ongoing operations and for implementing the Reconstruction Trust Program to rebuild Montana's Primary and Secondary systems. The amount of money

needed is staggering—tens of millions per year.

2. Management—we need to become better managers of resources and people, to make programs and people work toward common objectives, to solve personnel problems, and to start making performance a primary basis for personnel decisions.

3. Cost Reduction—we need to make sure that the people we work for get a dollar's worth of services for a dollar's worth of taxes. We've got to start treating highway funds as if they were coming out of our own pockets—they are. Costs must be brought under control by starting to say NO to the increasing list of things the public and we can't afford.

4. Public Service—we need to recognize that the public expects a responsive, positive government—we need to increase services to people of Montana, through quick responses to inquiries, through better planning, more public participation, and through even admitting a mistake or two.

Meeting these priorities will undoubtedly require changes in personnel, in organization, in procedures, and in how we think about our jobs and the Highway Department.

I intend to keep you informed of these changes as we go along, and invite your suggestions, and through the Department's organization, your participation. There will be mistakes, occasionally decisions will be made without everyone who should know being informed, and there will be decisions that don't satisfy everyone or even the majority.

But, the alternative to not solving the problems, not meeting the challenges, not establishing priorities and seeing them through, is more drastic changes at some time in the future, changes the Highway Department and its employees will not have any say about.

Based on my visits to the Highway Department offices to date, it is clear that most of you take pride in your work and in working for people of Montana. I believe this pride and willingness to face challenges dictates that we take it upon ourselves to lead the way.

NEWSLETTER LOGO?

Beginning with this issue, the Information Bureau will publish a bi-monthly newsletter for employees of the Department of Highways. Its purpose is to disseminate information and to stimulate a full sharing of information between management and employees of all of our divisions. Future editions will have ample space for employee comment, so please let us hear your questions and/or responses to articles, or requests for future articles.

The Director has decided to offer a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond to the employee who suggests the best design for our newsletter logo and name. The deadline for entries is July 17th. The contest will be judged by James Hahn, planning and research; Bob Hamilton, printing; and Rae Childs, information.

State of Montana
Office of the Governor
Helena, Montana 59620



May 26, 1981

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gary Wicks
FROM: TED SCHWINDEN
Governor
SUBJECT: One Helluva Job!

When the interim legislative committee begins its evaluation of the Highway Department, I hope they start by examining its performance since the flooding began on May 21! Your people worked their butts off and deserve a share of the credit for the fact that there were no serious injuries. Gruel and a number of other top-level people kept going around-the-clock, and the guys "in the trenches" really did a job directing traffic, protecting and repairing roads and structures, and "suffering" sightseers. They also were invaluable in keeping me informed through your radio network.

Please give all the folks my thanks and appreciation for "one helluva job."

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REAGAN: IMPACT ON HIGHWAYS

President Reagan's proposed highway program for future fiscal years has recently been introduced in Congress. Some of the Administration's proposals in regard to future highway funding which affect Montana are as follows:

The Secondary and Urban System programs would continue to be funded by the federal government for fiscal years 1982 and 1983 but, after these years would become a funding responsibility of the States.

Numerous funding categories would be eliminated by the proposed Reagan program. These categories are:

- Economic Growth Center Program
- Rail-Highway Crossing Program
- Pavement Marking Program
- Hazard Elimination Program
- Safer Off-System Roads Program

The highway programs under this proposal that would continue to be funded by the federal government for future fiscal years would be: Interstate, Interstate 4 R, Interstate Discretionary, Primary, Bridge Replacement, Forest Highway, Public Lands, Emergency Relief and the Planning Programs.

NEW FHWA REQUIREMENTS

The manual covering Utility Relocation, Adjustment and Reimbursement (PPM 30-4) is being rewritten so that the contents will correspond with the Federal-Aid Program Manual. The intent is to simplify and clarify the procedures which it covers.

New regulations for Relocation Assistance require that businesses which may be affected by a project must be contacted during the conceptual stage of project development to determine their needs and requirements. This contact should identify potential displaces and documentation should be included in the final Environmental Impact Statement.

The Federal Highway Administration, in response to the President's desire to reduce the impact of regulations, will undertake a priority review of hours of service, commercial vehicle inspection repair and maintenance, civil rights requirements, design standards for highways, buy America, air quality guidelines/environmental impact procedures, and guidelines for the development of environmental action plans. The Planning and Research Bureau will participate in a review of air quality guidelines. Generally the Montana Department of Highways favors fewer regulations and speedier handling of subjects that must be regulated.

PREVIOUS PROCEDURES ON HOLD

The previous joint FHWA/UMTA Transportation Planning Procedures are on

"hold" pending review and possible cancellation. In the interim, joint planning regulations that were in force before October 30, 1980, are to be followed.

FHWA is requiring 24-hour monitoring of the 55 mph speed limit beginning October 1, 1981. Additional manpower for the data collection and analysis will be necessary in lieu of automated equipment. The Planning and Research Bureau coordinates the monitoring program.

LETTING PLANS

The following is a listing of the major projects that are scheduled for contract letting between June and September of 1981. Most of the Interstate projects included in this time period will be finance using Advance Construction funding and the letting of the majority of the non-Interstate projects would be subject to additional federal funds being released for obligation the first part of August 1981.

| Project Location | Interstate Completion | Length in Miles |
|--|---|-----------------|
| Pipe Organ-N. (N. Sect.) | New Const.-Add 2 lanes | 3.3 |
| Dillon-S. (S. Sect.) | New Const.-4 lanes | 2.5 |
| Cascade-N. & S. | Plant Mix Surfacing | 14.3 |
| St. Regis-E. & W. | Grading, Structure | 0.3 |
| Big Timber-Greycliff | Lighting of Interchanges, Plant Mix Surfacing | 6.8 |
| | | |
| Brady-N. & S. | Interstate 3R | |
| Shelby-N. & S. | Recycle, Plant Mix Overlay | 11.6 |
| | Recycle, Plant Mix Overlay | 17.6 |
| | | |
| Primary Projects | | |
| U.S. 2-Glacier Co. Line-E. | Plant Mix Overlay | 6.4 |
| Chinook-East | Plant Mix Overlay | 9.7 |
| Victor-South | Plant Mix Overlay, Widen Strs. | 9.2 |
| U.S. 87-Wicks Lane to Bench Blvd.-Billings | Reconstruction | 1.0 |
| Colstrip-Forsyth (Center Sect.) | Reconstruction | 10.9 |
| | | |
| Loring-North | Secondary Projects | |
| Brady-East | Reconstruction | 5.0 |
| | Upgrading, Plant Mix Overlay | 7.5 |
| | | |
| Urban System Projects | | |
| 19th Ave.-Babcock to Durston-Bozeman | New Construction | 0.5 |
| | | |
| Bridge Replacement Projects | | |
| Madison St. Br.- Missoula | Bridge Rehabilitation | --- |
| Higgins Ave. Br.-Missoula | Bridge Rehabilitation | --- |

Also included in our current letting schedule thru September of 1981 that are not shown above are numerous minor projects such as rest area upgrading, signals, safety work, small structure contracts, etc.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL INTRODUCED

The Department of Highways has developed a Performance Appraisal System, which will be implemented July 1, 1981, for the evaluation of all management and non-management employees.

The new system was designed at the direction of Mr. Wicks by a committee of highway employees including Darrell Hagen, Data Processing Manager; Shirley Farley, GVW Assistant Administrator; Bob Rask, Supervisor Physical Testing Section; Pat LeTendre, Field Business Manager; and Dave Johnson, Supervisor Engineering Specialties Section. They were advised by Betty Taylor, Kathy McDonald, Ken McLaughlin and Russ McDonald of the Personnel Division.

The purposes of the Performance Appraisal System are to: identify and improve

employee understanding of duties and responsibilities; promote efficiency in management; improve employee performance and increase productivity; provide information on which outstanding performance can be recognized; provide a mechanism for improving unsatisfactory performance; and promote ongoing supervisor/employee communications.

The system will be one of planning between the employee and the immediate supervisor. Employees will be rated on performance and not personality traits. According to Director Wicks, "I want a frank and honest discussion between the supervisor and the employee about their mutual goals and objectives."

Interstate Highway Maintenance

The Department of Highways maintains 1931 two-lane miles of Interstate as part of our responsibility for the state's 9392 mile system. In fiscal 1980, \$31,000,000 was devoted to the repair and upkeep of our highways.

We are required to certify with the Federal Highway Administration that we are complying with their regulations, described in the Interstate Maintenance Guidelines as a condition of federal-aid funding. The guidelines determine the scope of the program for the Interstate system and supervisors in maintenance must know the requirements and follow the guidelines.

The eleven critical elements included are roadway surfaces, shoulders, roadsides, drainage, bridges, snow and ice control, traffic control devices, safety appurtenances, safety rest areas, access control and traffic safety in maintenance work zones.

Last year 16.5% of the total maintenance budget was expended for Interstate maintenance.

Snow Plow Blades

During an average winter, each of our 700 snow plows with carbide tips will use up at least two sets of cutting edges. Each set costs \$540. Recently, a special type of hardened blades were used on an experimental basis to test relative life and the amount of time spent changing worn out edges. It was determined that the hardened edges had to be replaced too often.

Litter Collection

The Maintenance Division spends many hours collecting and disposing of garbage, refuse and debris. In fiscal year 1980, \$318,000 was spent for this activity statewide. This represents approximately 30,000 man hours.

Construction and Repair Needs

Due to the fact that our primary highway system has a huge backlog of needs, it has been necessary to establish a general range of sufficiency rating for determining types of needs.

Generally, a primary highway is considered for major improvements if it receives a 40% or less sufficiency rating. It may be considered for 3R (resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation) work if it receives rating of between 40% and 60%.

Using these criteria, 464 miles of primary need construction and 2063 miles need repair.

Although the Department of Highways doesn't have jurisdiction over secondaries,

it is estimated that 2188 miles of gravel surface may qualify for construction and 2513 miles paved surface may qualify for repairs.

We do not have jurisdiction over urban routes, nor do we have estimates of the condition of these highways in areas where a transportation planning process is not active. Most of the larger cities in the state do have a planning process that does identify system needs.

Interstate

There are 60.64 miles of four-lane Interstate remaining to be built and 31.08 miles of two lane Interstate, for a total of 91.72 total miles.

GVW Violations

In May there were 171 overweight citations for a total due of \$6,545.

Those in excess of 10,000 pounds were:

| |
|---|
| 10,700 lbs. - Dick Irvin, Shelby |
| 11,100 lbs. - Beatrice Foods Great Falls |
| 11,150 lbs. - Century Paving Lewistown |
| 12,400 lbs. - Gary Yoode, Niarada |
| 12,780 lbs. - KAT Inc., Great Falls |
| 13,000 lbs. - Meyers Log, Kalispell |
| 13,600 lbs. - Independent Lumber Missoula |
| 14,000 lbs. - Baltrusch, Havre |
| 14,100 lbs. - Lawrence Trans. Glendive |
| 14,780 lbs. - William Clarke, Vaughn |
| 15,600 lbs. - Roger Claridge, Kalispell |
| 15,760 lbs. - Tri State Equipment, Inc. Boyd |
| 17,200 lbs. - T-Bar Trucking, Billings |

TRAVEL PROMOTION MOVES

Consistent with Governor Schwinden's and Director Wick's policy to place greater emphasis on highway construction, reconstruction and maintenance, the Travel Promotion Bureau, which has been in the Highway Department since 1947, will be transferred to the Division of Economic Development of the Department of Commerce.

The Travel Promotion Bureau is responsible for marketing Montana as a vacation destination. By doing so, tourists select Montana as a place to vacation and contribute sizeably to Montana's income and taxes. A recent study on the impact of tourism on the Montana economy ranked travel as the second largest job producing, and fourth largest income producing primary industry in the state. In 1979, travel contributed nearly \$18 million in fuel tax revenues to the earmarked highway account.

Because the Travel Promotion Bureau constituted over half of the Division of Public Affairs & Tourism, the Division will be disbanded. The other functions will remain in the Department of Highways. The Information Bureau has been assigned to the Director's Office, the Safety Bureau and the Energy Conservation Bureau will become part of Centralized Services.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

On May 5, Department of Highways Director, Gary J. Wicks, issued a policy statement warning that sexual harassment on the job will not be condoned or tolerated.

The Civil Rights office plans to visit each Field Division this summer to explain what sexual harassment is and how to eliminate it. A program was presented recently for headquarters employees to discuss the reality of sexual harassment in the work place.

The headquarters presentation included Joy McGrath and Claudia Kuric of the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, and Ray Brown, Administrator of the Montana Human Rights Commission. McGrath termed sexual harassment "an economic and a power issue" and Kuric said one official assessment has put the total national cost of sexual harassment on the job at \$100 million a year, counting the costs of such things as lost production, sick leave, medical claims, and replacement workers. Brown commended the Department for its efforts to increase the awareness of sexual harassment on the job, its remedies and ramifications.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines establish three criteria for determining sexual harassment. The guidelines state that unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission is made a condition of an individual's employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual.
3. Such conduct substantially interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Employees should treat sexual harassment in the office as you would any other office problem by first discussing it with your immediate supervisor. If you feel you cannot talk to your immediate supervisor about it, then you should go to the next level supervisor to discuss the situation.

If the situation has not been resolved after discussing it with your supervisors, contact the Civil Rights Office at 449-4723 for additional information.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

The 47th Legislative Assembly made a number of changes in gross vehicle weight laws. Senate Bill 346 revises the permit fee schedules. Some of the special permit fees had not been increased for 26 years. The revision of fees should generate an estimated two million dollars of additional revenue for the Department of Highways. The bill also increases the legal length limit from 60 feet to 65 feet and eliminates special permits for weights up to and including 80,000 pounds.

Several bills will result in a decrease in revenue. House Bill 47 exempts travel trailers from the payment of G.V.W. fees. House Bill 522 provides an option for an operator to pay G.V.W. fees on a monthly, rather than quarterly or yearly basis. Senate Bill 304 repeals the dealer demonstration permit for trucks and trailers, which will result in a loss of revenue of only about \$1,000 a year but, more importantly, the loss of an administrative headache.

Two bills provide for greater safety and protection of Montana's highways. Senate Bill 434 limits the maximum load per inch of tire width to 600 pounds. House Bill 331 allows the Department to impose speed as well as weight restrictions on sections of road during spring break-up periods.

One bill, House Bill 299, allows a 20% increase in maximum weight limitations for farm vehicles within a fifty mile radius of the harvesting field to the point of first unloading. Although greater weight is allowed, the bill restricts vehicle speed to 40 miles per hour.

Legislative Interim Study

House Joint Resolution 56 passed by the recent session of the Legislature calls for a comprehensive interim study of the administration of the Department of Highways and the Montana Highway Commission.

The study will be conducted by a legislative subcommittee of the following eight members selected from the Senate and House Committees on Highways and Transportation, State Administration and Local Government. Senator Roger H. Elliott, District 8, Columbia Falls; Senator John E. Healy, District 44, Butte; Senator Lawrence G. Stimatz, District 43, Butte; Senator Larry J. Tveit, District 27, Fairview; Representative John G. Harp, District 19, Kalispell; Representative Paul K. Kropp, District 5, Malta; Representative Paul G. Pistoria, District 39, Great Falls; and Representative Steve Waldron, District 97, Missoula.

2000 copies of this newsletter were produced at a unit cost of \$220 or \$.11 each

Rae Childs, Editor, Public Information Officer

RESEARCH AVAILABLE

We will report regularly on the latest developments in the field of highway research, the results of experiments recently concluded, and new technology that shows promise.

Primary activities of the research program include: identification and prioritization of research needs; budgeting funds for new and existing projects; selection of agencies to conduct scientific work, negotiation of contracts, monitoring study progress, and coordination with federal highway people.

The research manager also reviews and distributes incoming research material from the FHWA, Transportation Research Board (TRB), National Cooperative Research Highway Program (NCHRP), and other states. If you need a specific report, we have a large collection on hand or we can order it for you, time permitting. Other books or documents should be ordered directly from the source, or requested from the Montana State Library.

We coordinate both the FHWA Experimental Features and Demonstration Programs. An experimental project is initiated by the State and usually employs regular federal-aid construction funds, and is quite limited in size and scope. Demonstrations are announced by FHWA, relate to a specific type of work, and can range from a one-hour workshop to a major construction feature for which substantial, additional funds are available. While we don't object if your office communicates directly with the FHWA on one of these pro-

grams, we do need to know of your plans at the very onset, and would appreciate being kept informed of your activities. We can help you avoid some common pitfalls.

Future articles will discuss current research projects and findings from them.

Personnel

As of April 28, 1981, there were 1903 full-time and 58 part-time employees. The new Classification and Wage Schedule will be distributed in June.

New Positions

Gene Huntington is the new Executive Staff Assistant to the Director. Betty Taylor is the Civil Rights Officer, and is assigned to the Director's staff.

Madison K. Miner was appointed Chief-Field Maintenance Bureau at Lewistown Division effective March 7, 1981.

Training

New video equipment has been ordered for training purposes and will be delivered to the Divisions in the near future.

The Basic Engineering Workbook self-study course which is designed to train persons who are now holding positions of Engineering Aide I and want to qualify for Engineering Aide II was recently sent to all Divisions for distribution.

Retirement

Darrell P. Bradshaw, Field Superintendent at Drummond, after 29 years. Henry R. Galle, Mechanic/Machinist at Billings after nearly 14 years. Charles L. King, Equipment Foreman at Great Falls after 28 years. Sam M. Stanisich, Maintenance Supervisor at Butte after 23 years.

DOH MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ANALYZED

R. J. Hansen and Associates, Sacramento, a management group, has been selected to perform a review of the Department of Highways' organizational and management practices.

"Hansen and Associates are nationally recognized experts in highway management practices and will develop recommendations for a management system that will improve operations and efficiency of the Department," according to Director Gary Wicks.

"It is my goal to develop more effective tools for managing day-to-day operations and reducing costs of the Department", Wicks noted.

"The Department of Highways is facing reductions in the amounts of federal-aid money under President Reagan's highway proposals at the same time as our primary source of income, vehicle user taxes, is decreasing," Wicks pointed out. "We have to do a better job of delivering a dollars worth of good highway for every tax dollar we spend."

The study will analyze nine major functions of the Department, identify any problem areas, develop solutions supported by a cost benefit analysis for each area, and recommend better methods of administration or operation. The functions to be reviewed include: equipment; maintenance; pavement design and management; construction; preconstruction; project formulation; selection and priority; fiscal planning and cash forecasting; supplies and materials; and organizational structure.

Wicks said that the consultants will be assisted by steering committees for each study area made up of Department personnel. The project coordinator for the Department is L. S. "Bucky" Harris, secondary roads unit manager.

Hansen was selected for the \$67,800 study after a nationwide search of management consultants. Proposals were solicited from twenty firms, including five from Montana. The study will be completed by August and will be made available to the Interim Legislative Study Committee.